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Letter dated 10 June 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith a letter from Hoshyar Zebari, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq, addressed to you concerning the mandate review of the Multinational Force. I have further the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) T. Hamid **Al Bayati**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 10 June 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

During the last six months, Iraq has seen a continuation and consolidation of the trends witnessed last year, namely, a significant reduction in the overall violence and the number of terrorist attacks in Iraq. These positive results have been achieved through concerted government action involving security, political and economic measures that have strengthened national reconciliation and political inclusion, elements that bode well as we look forward towards our forthcoming provincial elections in October.

On the security front, let me note in particular the Iraqi Government's successful imposition of the rule of law in Basra, a city where until recently the authority of the state had been challenged by unlawful militias and armed groups. The willingness of the Iraqi Government to confront head-on illegal militias and armed groups that challenge the rule of law, not only in Basra but everywhere in Iraq, demonstrates the progress achieved in the development of the Iraqi security forces, and their capacity to undertake increasingly difficult missions.

On the political front, we have achieved significant progress, with the passage of key legislation, namely, the Justice and Accountability Law, the Amnesty Law, the 2008 Budget, and the Law on Governorates not Organized into Regions. Our Council of Representatives is hard at work to follow up with other key pieces of legislation that will further promote national reconciliation. As things stand, we look with confidence towards Iraq's next major political milestone: the elections scheduled for October 2008. With these elections, Iraq will complete one full electoral cycle.

On the economic front, Iraq has improved its budget execution considerably, in spite of difficult conditions, a result praised at the recent International Compact with Iraq's Ministerial Conference, and has managed, through sound monetary policy, to cut down on core inflation, measures that are of great benefit to all Iraqis.

Regionally, the relationships between Iraq and its neighbours continue to develop. Our meetings with our neighbours, expanded to include the permanent members of the Security Council and the world's leading economies and other key countries and organizations are now an ongoing Iraqi-led process recognized and supported by the United Nations. This process has led to concrete mechanisms through which Iraq and its neighbours can address issues of common concern.

Yet threats persist, and security remains the leading concern and foremost responsibility of the Government of Iraq. Even though the Iraqi security forces are now better trained, better equipped and greater in number, they still are unable to assume full responsibility for the maintenance of security on all Iraqi territory.

Iraq, therefore, still needs the assistance and support of the Multinational Force, whose mandate is now due for review, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1790 (2007), and in accordance with Iraq's request expressed in Prime Minister Nuri Kamel al-Maliki's letter addressed to the President of the Security Council dated 7 December 2007 (see annex II to the resolution).

In this regard, the Government of Iraq welcomes the continued support of the Multinational Force consistent with its mandate as set forth in Security Council

resolution 1546 (2004), including the tasks and arrangements specified in the letters annexed thereto, as extended by resolutions 1637 (2005), 1723 (2006) and 1790 (2007), and recognizing that the mandate may be terminated upon request by the Government of Iraq.

Note that Iraq is currently negotiating bilateral security arrangements with the United States of America and other friendly nations that should, once implemented, address Iraq's security needs currently covered by the mandate of the Multinational Force. These security arrangements should reflect the progress achieved in the development of Iraqi security forces. The Government of Iraq is grateful to the Multinational Force for its vital contribution towards the development of Iraqi forces, and towards establishing security and stability in Iraq.

Equally, the Government of Iraq wishes to express its appreciation for the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, as set forth in resolution 1770 (2007) and notes that the trend to increase the presence of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in Iraq should be continued.

The Government of Iraq also welcomes the continuation of the current arrangements affecting the Development Fund for Iraq and its International Advisory and Monitoring Board as extended in resolution 1790 (2007). The Government of Iraq reaffirms the important roles of the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board in ensuring the responsible management of Iraq's resources to the optimum benefit of the Iraqi people. It also acknowledges the contribution of these mechanisms towards strengthening Iraq's partnership with the international community through transparency and accountability in resource distribution.

The Government further requests a reconsideration of Iraq's compensatory obligations that have increased considerably in magnitude in the last year and that continue to put pressure on the Iraqi budget and reconstruction and development programmes.

In spite of the difficulties facing us, the people of Iraq remain determined to establish a democratic, federal, stable and united Iraq. Their democratically elected government is equally determined to establish a secure environment in Iraq, where the Iraqi population will feel protected and where a prosperous and vibrant economy will develop. We are certain that the international community will help us achieve these objectives so that Iraq becomes, once again, an active and supportive member in the family of nations.

(*Signed*) Hoshyar **Zebari**
Minister for Foreign Affairs